



MULLIN'S NOTES

The Official Newsletter of the 19th Assembly District



DECEMBER 2007

Historic Healthcare Reform Bill Passed By Assembly

Every year, California has 5.1 million people who do not have health coverage for at least part of the year. People without insurance get less preventive care, are diagnosed with serious illnesses much later and have poorer health outcomes. To combat this growing crisis, an historic healthcare bill was passed by the California State Assembly that will provide or require health care for a large majority of Californians. AB1X 1, the Health Care Security and Cost Reduction Act, is being touted as the largest healthcare reform by any state. Under this bill, it will bring health care coverage to approximately 70% of California's 5.1 million uninsured, most of whom are low-income working individuals and their families, including 800,000 children.

AB1X 1 provides assistance to low and middle income families by creating a purchasing pool that allows individuals to benefit from affordable rates. Exemptions will be given to low income persons up to 250% of the federal poverty level (\$43,000 for a family of three) and those experiencing unique hardships that make it difficult for them to pay their health care premiums. It also protects working families with higher income as well. Those earning between 250-400 percent of the federal poverty level (\$43,000-69,000 for a family of three) will receive a tax credit if the cost of buying insurance exceeds 5.5 percent of their income.

Eligibility for Medi-Cal and the Healthy Family Programs will dramatically expand under AB1X 1. Families who



Assemblymember Mullin

Photo by Russell Collins Stiger

have children will get access to no/low-cost comprehensive health coverage. The legislation will also increase funding for the Early Access to Primary Care Program to provide cost-effective clinic services to low-income Californians who aren't eligible for other state subsidized coverage.

Furthermore, AB1X 1 protects patients, providers and the state budget. It will require insurers to spend no less than 85 cents of every premium dollar on medical care. It increases access and promotes affordable care by reforming regulations, expanding the use of nurse practitioners and physician assistants, enhancing retail clinics, and other measures. Finally, it reduces pressure on California's General Fund by securing new federal funds that will raise Medi-Cal reimbursements to doctors and hospitals.

Funding will come from various fees and taxes including a \$2 per pack increase in the tobacco tax, a hospital fee

at 4% of revenue, Federal matching funds of nearly \$5 billion, and a tax on employers of 2 to 6.5 percent of their payrolls. Employers with payrolls up to \$100,000 would be expected to contribute at least 2% of payroll. Employers with payrolls from \$100,000 to \$250,000 would be expected to contribute at least 4% of payroll. Employers with payrolls above \$250,000 would be expected to contribute at least 6.5% of payroll. In addition, employers would be expected to either offer insurance to part-time employees or contribute to the public purchasing pool for those employees.

The bill now moves to the Senate where similar hearings will be held. If approved by the Senate, and signed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, AB1X 1 will be put on the November ballot. For more information about this bill or any other pending legislation, please visit www.assembly.ca.gov.

Protect the Environment!

How to properly dispose your old medications

Improper disposal of unwanted or old medications pharmaceuticals can have a dire effects on the environment. Since medications dissolve easily and don't evaporate at normal temperatures or pressure, they can make their way into the soil via sewage, treated sewage sludge, or irrigation with reclaimed water. The U.S. Geologic Services reported that pharmaceutical drugs have been detected in water samples collected from streams considered susceptible to contamination.

Unused or expired pharmaceuticals were commonly flushed down the toilet to ensure potentially harmful drugs were kept from accidental use, especially by children. However, this method is being recognized as an incorrect disposal and environmentally unsafe. San Mateo County has a program that is considered to be the first in the country to accept all legal pharmaceuticals for proper disposal.

The San Mateo County Pharmaceutical Disposal Program offers the public a convenient, viable, and environmentally friendly alternative to flushing pills or medicinal liquids into the wastewater stream or placement in municipal landfills.

This program helps seniors avoid dangerous dosage errors, helps reduce or prevent recreational pharmaceutical use, and helps stop the continuous contamination of the environment by flushing medicines down countless drains.

Here is helpful information about resources to properly dispose of unwanted or expired pharmaceuticals.

Protect the environment!

Prevent overdoses and errors!

Keep drugs away from children!

Pharmaceutical disposal receptacles can be found at several local law enforcement agencies. Each steel receptacle is clearly marked, with large, red biohazard logos and easily seen at each location. Anyone can place their unwanted medicines into the receptacles. Each receptacle's contents are disposed of by a licensed and bonded hazardous waste disposal company.

Find confidential drop-off containers at these law enforcement agencies:

San Mateo County
San Mateo County Sheriff's Office
 400 County Center
 Redwood City, CA 94063
 (650) 363-4911
www.co.sanmateo.ca.us

City of Atherton
Atherton Police Department
 83 Ashfield Road
 Atherton, CA 94027
 (650) 688-6500
www.ci.atherton.ca.us

City of Belmont
Belmont Police Department
 One Twin Pines Lane
 Belmont, CA 94002
 (650) 595-7400
www.belmont.gov

City of Burlingame
Burlingame Police Department
 1111 Trousdale Drive
 Burlingame, CA 94010
 (650) 777-4100
www.burlingame.org

City of Daly City
Daly City Police Department
 333 90th Street
 Daly City, CA 94015
 (650) 991-8119
www.dalycity.org



Town of Hillsborough
Hillsborough Police Department
 1600 Floribunda Avenue
 Hillsborough, CA 94010
 (650) 375-7470
www.hillsborough.net

City of Millbrae
Millbrae Police Department
 581 Magnolia Avenue
 Millbrae, CA 94030
 (650) 259-2300
www.ci.millbrae.ca.us

City of Pacifica
Pacifica Police Department
 2075 Coast Hwy
 Pacifica, CA 94044
 (650) 738-7314
www.cityofpacifica.org

City of San Bruno
San Bruno Police Department
 1177 Huntington Avenue
 San Bruno, CA 94066
 (650) 616-7100
www.sanbruno.ca.gov

City of San Mateo
San Mateo Police Department
 2000 S Delaware St
 San Mateo, CA 94403
 (650) 522-7700
www.cityofsanmateo.org

City of South San Francisco
South San Francisco Police Department
 Municipal Services Building
 33 Arroyo Drive, Suite C
 South San Francisco, CA 94080
 (650) 877-8900
www.ci.ssf.ca.us

The San Mateo County Pharmaceutical Disposal Program does not accept illegal substances such as marijuana, ecstasy, or methamphetamines.

Staff Profile: Irene Wan, Legislative Fellow

Irene Wan is a Jesse M. Unruh Assembly Fellow. Each year, 18 highly qualified university graduates are selected to be full-time staff member for the duration of the legislative session. Fellows assist in the formulation and tracking of legislation. I am pleased to welcome Irene to my staff as a Legislative Fellow.

I was born in Oakland, CA and raised in Alameda alongside one brother and one sister by first generation Chinese American parents. My sister currently works in finance in New York, and my brother is a Social Worker (case manager) in San Francisco for Meals on Wheels.

I am a proud product of 16 years in the public school system, and graduated from UC Berkeley in 2004 with a degree in Mass Communications and a minor in Ethnic Studies. During college, I was actively involved in Alpha Omicron Pi International Women's Fraternity, where I served as both the Philanthropy Chair and as the Vice President of Academic Development.

I also worked at the Student Learning Center as a writing tutor and writing workshop leader, helping my peers improve their research, analysis and communication skills.

My third major campus activity was teaching a DE-Cal (Democratic Education at Cal) course on Asian Americans and Public Service Careers. This course focused on common cultural factors that may influence career choice (i.e. immigrant parents' pressure), and various avenues and capacities through which one could pursue a career in the NGO/non-profit and governmental sectors.

During college, I spent some time in Washington, DC through the Organization of Chinese Americans summer internship program (summer 2002), and the UCDC program (fall 2003 semester). During the summer of 2002, I interned at the National Education

Association (NEA) and helped to develop an Asian/Pacific Islander American history curriculum for US history courses in middle schools. In the fall of 2003, I interned for the education group of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, and assisted with legal action to create parity in public schools and de-segregate communities.

Since graduating from college, my most significant work experience (almost 3 years) was at UC Berkeley with an entity called the Campus Community Initiative. The Campus Community Initiative mission is to promote shared pride and purpose for all UC Berkeley campus community members, and to foster an inclusive environment and a greater sense of community, individual learning and growth.

The major projects that I provided support on include:

Two campus wide forums on diversity and inclusion (one faculty-focused, one staff-focused), a UC-system wide forum on graduate education and the professoriate entitled "Changing the Culture of the Academy"; creating and setting up the new administrative structure for the new Vice Chancellor-Equity and Inclusion; and creating a website on diversity and inclusion resources for all UC Berkeley campus community members.

I love to read, travel, eat, go on hikes, explore new places and meet new people. I'm honored and excited to be a 2007-2008 Assembly Fellow in the office of Assemblymember Gene Mullin, and I look forward to working closely with all of the Capitol and District office staff members and getting the hands-on experience to learn how policy is created in the state.

Please feel free to contact Irene at my Capitol Office at (916) 319-2019 or via email at irene.wan@asm.ca.gov if you have suggestions on how we can better serve you.

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Consultant

Sophia Kwong

Consultant

Francie Rupert

Committee Secretary

Scholarships for California students!

Attending college is a life changing experience, but the financial burden of paying tuition or books can be overwhelming. As Chair of the Assembly Education Committee, I would like to let you know of the scholarship opportunities that are available for students. The Campaign for College Opportunity will be having their "Save Me a Spot in College" scholarship contest! This contest is an effort to hear young Californians speak on how a college education can improve their lives and provide a better future for California.

KEY CONTEST INFO:

- Students may submit a written word, poster, or TV ad answering the contest question: "Why should California leaders save you and your peers a spot in college?"
- All California 6th-12th grade students are eligible.
- More than 100 students across California will share a total of \$100,000 in scholarship

awards!

- Deadline for all contest submissions is March 15, 2008.
- Winners will be announced in May 2008.
- Students participating in the scholarship contest will learn about college and help promote college participation.
- Contest submissions will be used to raise awareness among California residents and leaders about the importance of providing college opportunity to the growing young population.
- Teachers, counselors, principals, and parents can sign-up on the website to get their students involved!

The contest is made possible by a generous grant from the College Access Foundation of California, The California Department of Education, and schools across the state. For more information or to register, please www.collegecampaign.org/contest or call 1-800-459-9586.



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For scheduling inquiries, email virginia.kroger@asm.ca.gov for District Events or alisa.nantze@asm.ca.gov for Capitol Events. Include the date, time, and purpose of the event.

